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**Mining and Reclamation Services**  
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March 20, 2019

The Hon. Raul M. Grijalva, Chairman  
The Hon. Rob Bishop, Ranking Member  
The Hon. Alan Lowenthal, Subcommittee on Energy and Natural Resources, Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Reauthorization of the Collection Fees Supporting the Abandoned Mine Land Fund**

Dear Representatives:

I have been working to address the impact of historic mining for the past two decades and I implore you to **support reauthorization of the collection fees associated with the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) of 1977.**

I am a small business owner that partners with the active mining industry to affect real change on our land and in our water by developing and implementing cost-effective solutions to the century-old impacts of the coal mining in our country. I have been involved with the reclamation of hundreds of acres of mine lands as well as the restoration of miles of streams. This work has been made possible by SMCRA. I grew up in the coalfields of Pennsylvania playing on coal refuse piles, not knowing that there was something that could be done. Attending Slippery Rock University I was provided the opportunity to learn about the impacts of coal mining and what could be done. I was inspired to pursue a career focused on taking on the challenge of abandoned mine lands.

My company, BioMost, Inc. founded in 1998 is a small business located in Mars, Pennsylvania providing consulting and construction services that employs seven full-time staff of engineers, geologists, and environmental scientists. 90% of our work is directly related to the mining and reclamation industry. Over the past twenty years, we have been involved with the efforts to address the impact of mining in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, and Oklahoma.

Much of our work is has been focused within the headwaters of the Slippery Rock Creek watershed in conjunction with the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition. Within the Slippery Rock watershed alone, through the work of coalition partners that include coal mining companies, limestone quarry operators, trucking companies, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, colleges and universities, and many others, there is about \$10 MM worth of environmental infrastructure that has been installed over the last two decades. This work has resulted in water quality improvements allowing fish to return to streams that had been dead for over a century. The land has also been restored from open pits filled with polluted water to productive farms where the landowner has been able to get three cuttings of hay from a restored coal mine site.

AML work is important to providing good paying construction jobs in rural areas. In addition to the folks that I employ directly, abandoned mine land reclamation supports **hundreds of jobs** including equipment operators, laborers, treatment plant operators, **coal and limestone miners**, truck drivers, equipment and fuel companies, mechanics, local plant nurseries, feed and grain suppliers, pipe suppliers, the list goes on.

BioMost is involved in the operation and maintenance of twenty treatment systems located in Butler County, where a non-profit organization, Stream Restoration Incorporated, was recently awarded a \$1MM grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to rehabilitate four systems. This project would not be possible without the AML fund providing cash match, which is a requirement of the state-funded grant program. This will support five full-time construction jobs for more than a year, support my entire staff, and provide a significant economic impact in rural northern Butler County.

There is a tremendous amount of public land within the Slippery Rock headwaters area, much of it State Gamelands and Parks. The National North Country trail passes within 1,000' of five passive treatment sites, at times crossing on through the abandoned mine drainage sites. The result of AML reclamation is not just cleaner water and enhanced land value, there is a lasting impact of pride in the community when the scars of the past have been removed and increased tourism.

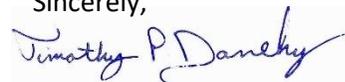
During a public meeting held at the Boyers Sportsmen's Association during the development of the Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Conservation Plan, local residents voiced their concerns about another government program dictating what they could do with their land. An animated discussion ensued and we as the meeting facilitators became concerned that a shouting match would develop. Before we had the chance to intercede, the residents noted that Slippery Rock Creek was "cleaner than it has ever been" and that they saw local kids fishing at a bridge near Boyers, PA where that they had not seen fish since they lived there. They all agreed that the work being done on AML issues in the headwaters of Slippery Rock Creek had improved their community. It was amazing to watch a public dialogue resolve itself to an acknowledgement of the good that has been accomplished through public-private partnerships.

**The AML fund has been a critical resource providing the men and women of western Pennsylvania the opportunity to work to improve their communities; Without the AML fund, sustaining these improvements will be a difficult, if not impossible task.** Below is a brief list of a small example of the impact of SMCRA and the AML fund in just two counties in Pennsylvania.

**Select AML Efforts within Butler & Mercer Counties, Pennsylvania (approximate values):**

- >20 major AML projects ranging from \$50,000 to > \$1MM
- >\$10MM worth of contracts, and economic activity (e.g. coal ash tipping fee)
- >100 temporary construction jobs (2 months to >1 year duration)
- >40 full-time limestone quarry jobs supported
- >100 trucking jobs supported
- ~500 students involved in research, monitoring, and hands-on learning

Sincerely,



Timothy P. Danehy, QEP  
President, BioMost, Inc.